





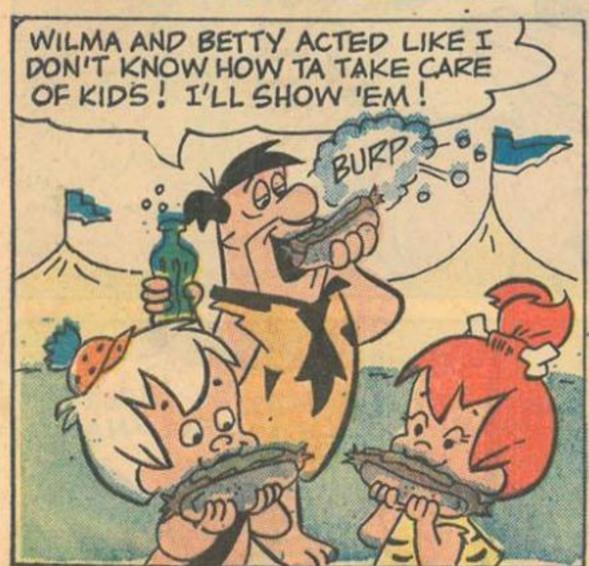
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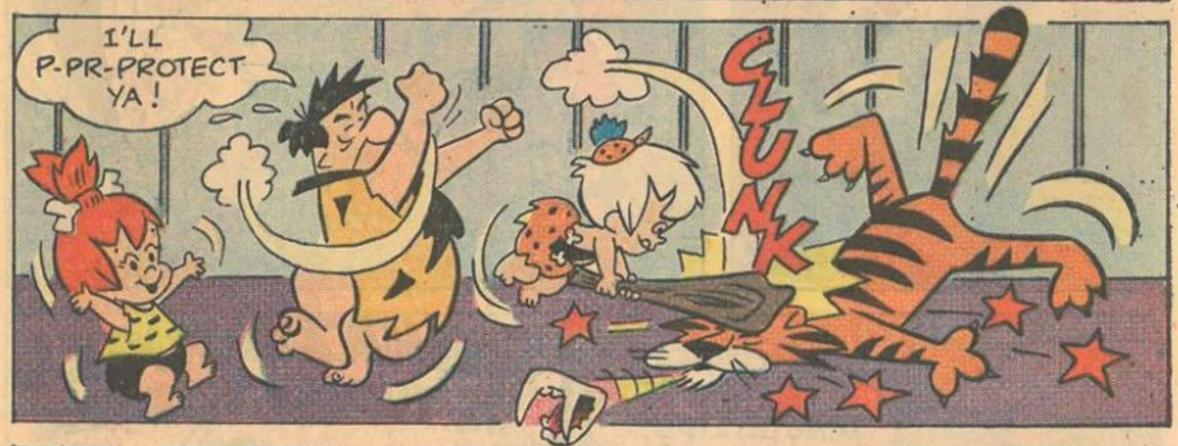








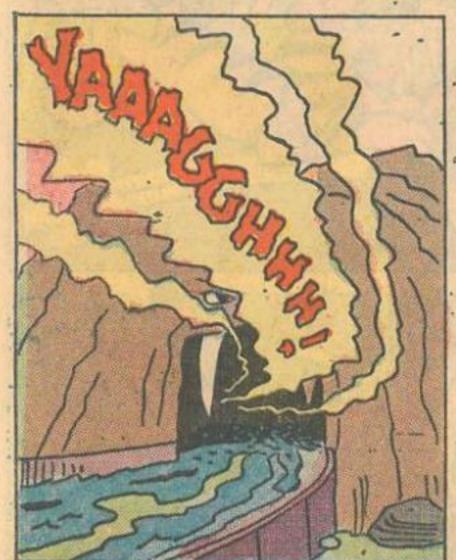














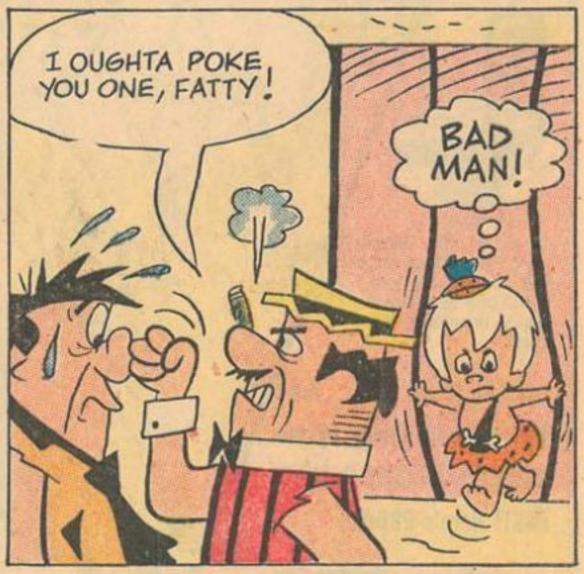


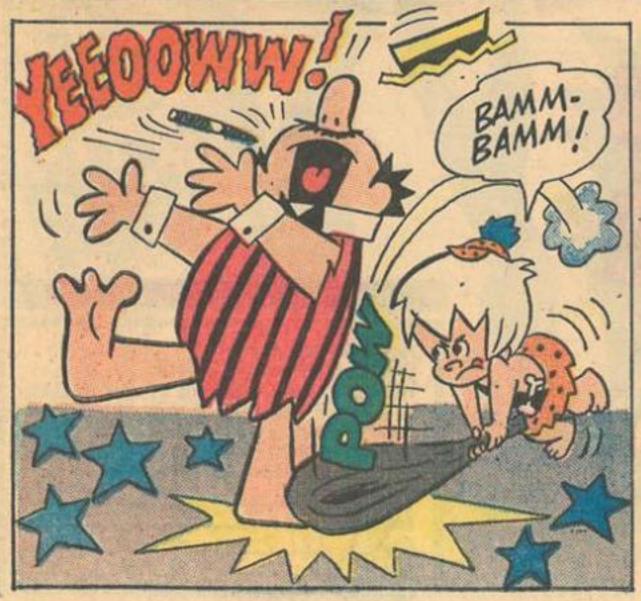
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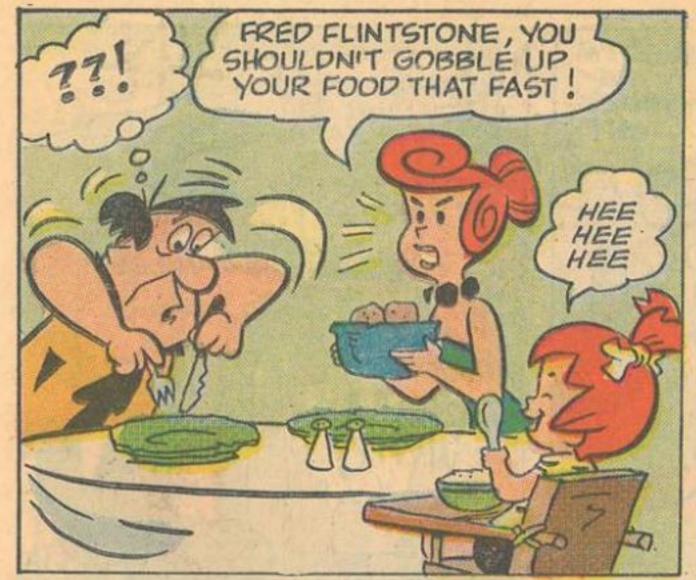


























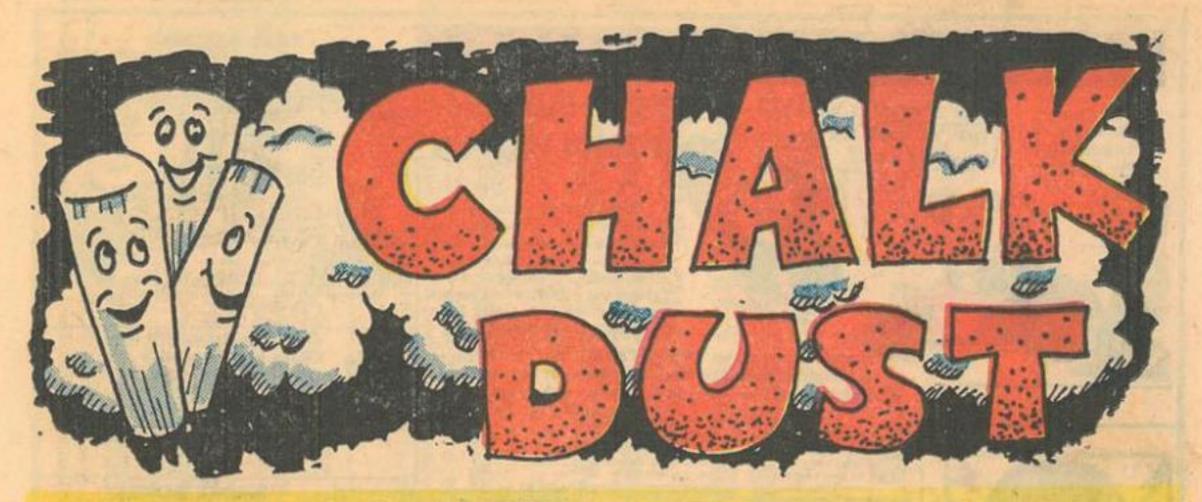












My first appointment as a teacher was to P.S. 45 which was located on the east side of our city. I was young, and full of energy and enthusiasm. I wanted to be a good teacher. I taught there for five years and then went to a junior high school. That was a promotion for me. The only trouble with teaching is that you come up against a lot of situations which could be bewildering to you. You never were taught about them or how to handle them by the professors in the education courses.

I had finished lunch in the teachers' dining room when our principal, Dr. William Jenkins, came up to me.

"Tomorrow your class is going to have a visitor. Mrs.

Deric Velok is going to try some of her new mathematic concepts on your students. I know you will cooperate."

"Is she a licensed teacher?" I asked. "According to our union contract, only a licensed teacher can teach. Even, then, she can't come into my classroom without my permission."

"She isn't a licensed teacher," sighed the principal.
"She is the wife of Dr. Herman Velok, professor and head of the Mathematical Department of the State University. I know you will help us. She is working on a special research project."

"Want to bet she'll never be the same after my students get through with her?" I challenged. This he ignored. Next morning, she came to my classroom. After my monitor took attendance, she began.

"By the use of a general classifier in mathematics, we can group different things together. Thus, if we wanted to add 5 cattle to 3 sheep we could say we have 8 animals. Is that clear?"

"You can't do that," objected Paul Weiner. "Just won't work. My uncle owns a big ranch in Wyoming. I spent the summer there. He told me about the wars between the cattle men and the sheep men. So, you can't put cattle and sheep together."

Give her credit. It was unexpected, but she did her best to handle things.

"Les us say we had two whales and three sharks.

Then, we could say we had five fish," she told the class.

"You can't do that," objected Marsha Kinley. "A whale isn't a fish. It is a mammal. It has lungs and must take in fresh air like we do."

Definitely, she was getting a bit upset. So, she tried something else.

"Suppose I gave you twelve differently colored jelly beans, told you to hold them for five minutes, and then divide them among five students and also yourself. How many jelly beans would each have?" She pointed to Frank Donnell to answer. She didn't know Frank as I did.

"The students won't have any jelly beans," he told her.

"Such a simple calculation," she said. "Each would have two jelly beans."

"You are wrong," replied Frank energetically. "I like jelly beans, so I would eat them all up and not give any away."

She should have quit right there. She didn't knew my kids the way I did. So, she tried another question.

"You have a dollar bill. You want to use the subway. A token sells for 35 cents. You give the man at the booth one dollar. How much change do you get?" She pointed to Jimmy Abramson.

"It all depends," was his simple answer which puzzled her.

"There can only be one answer," she replied doing her best to control herself.

"If the man in the booth is honest, he gives you 65 cents change. If he is careless and a bit dumb, he can even give you 80 cents change. If he is dishenest, then he can give you 40 cents change."

She looked now as though she was ready to call it quits. One more try. She took a piece of chalk and wrote one line on the board; next to it two lines; and next to that three lines. Then she pointed to Suzie Chang and asked her what did it mean to her.

"That is the way we write the first three numbers in Chinese," smiled Suzie Chang. "The single line meaning one — we call ee or yee. The two lines meaning two — we call erh. The three lines meaning three — we call san. My father is Professor William Chang. He has written many books on Mathematics. Just now, he is in West Germany lecturing as a guest professor at the University of Bonn."

Our visitor just fled from the classroom, and then I was able to go on with our scheduled lessons.

